

WITH PULL-OUT  
WORKBOOK

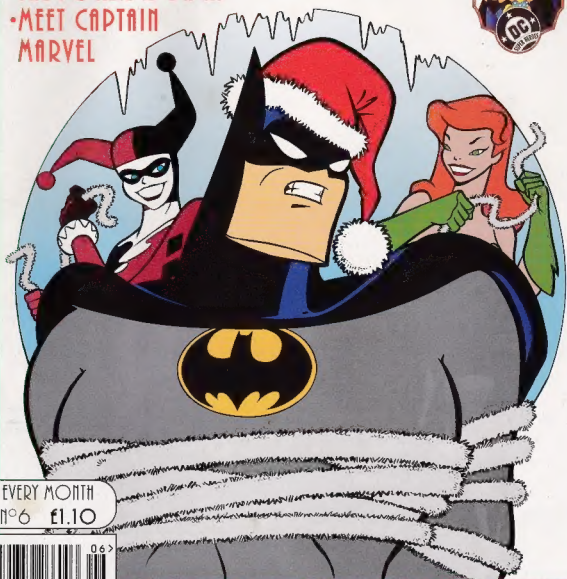
REDAN

I LOVE TO READ

# BATMAN™

INSIDE:

- THE JOKER IS BACK
- MEET CAPTAIN MARVEL



EVERY MONTH

№6 £1.10



ACTION



STORIES



ADVENTURE





IN

## SKY HIGH

Christmas Eve in Gotham City and the great festive parade had just begun. But someone was not happy about it.



The Joker had escaped from Arkham Asylum and Batman was sure a Christmas parade would appeal to his twisted sense of fun.

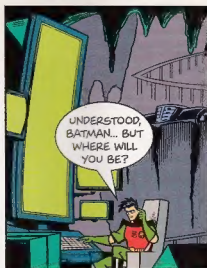
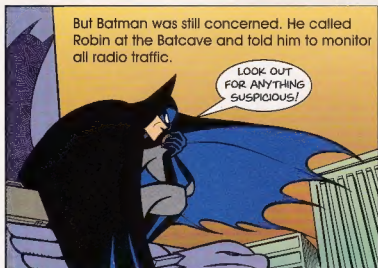


Commissioner Gordon had posted all his men to cover the parade and the Police Department airship was standing by.



He showed Batman the detailed security schedule he had prepared.





Robin relayed the emergency to Batman, but it made no sense.



Batman told Robin to go and investigate the airfield disturbance.

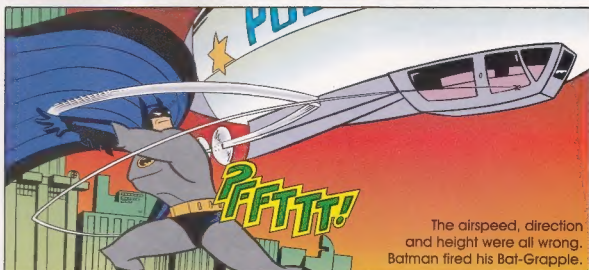


He had spotted something else...

Batman ditched his disguise and went into action.

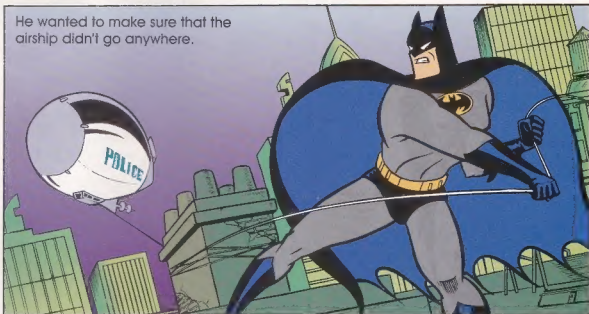


He had memorised the commissioner's security schedule and one glance at the police airship told him it was not on the correct course.



The airspeed, direction and height were all wrong. Batman fired his Bat-Grapple.

He wanted to make sure that the airship didn't go anywhere.





The Joker appeared at the airship's hatchway.

TRUST YOU TO RUIN MY CHRISTMAS GIFT TO GOTHAM. NOW I CAN'T DROP MY **BOMB** ON THE PARADE!



Just then, Robin called in from the airfield. They had found the airship's crew tied up in a hanger.

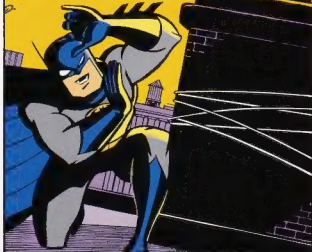


In one cunning move, the Joker had lured the police away from the parade, and used the Police airship to sneak in close.



But with it anchored fast, he could not complete his terrible plan.

Safely away from the parade crowds, the Joker's gift exploded without harming anyone.



Then Batman gave the Joker a gift of his own...



YOUR CELL AT ARKHAM AWAITS, JOKER...

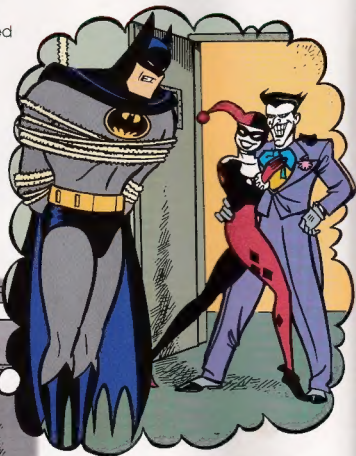
THE END



CHRISTMAS ISN'T CHRISTMAS UNLESS YOU CAN RUIN IT FOR  
BATMAN... AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT HARLEY AND IVY THINK IN...

# CHRISTMAS GIFTS!

Snow was falling on the steep dark eaves and gloomy barred sills of Gotham City's Arkham Asylum for the Criminally Insane. The only sounds were a distant, strangled yodelling from ward ten, where some extremely sedated inmates had tried to form a choir. Another sound was the steady *tack! tack! tack!* being made by Guard Jenks as he nailed lengths of tinsel up along the gloomy asylum hallways.



In her cell on the third floor, Harleen Quinzel, better known as the flamboyant and dangerous **Harley Quinn**, listened to Jenks and his hammering as it approached down the hall. She longed to be free from Arkham and to be with her one true love, the Joker. But more than anything else, she longed to make Batman pay for locking her up in the asylum and ruining her Christmas.



In another cell, in another wing, Pamela Isley - the venomous **Poison Ivy** - was thinking similar thoughts. Thanks to Batman, her freedom had been taken from her and she intended to do something about it. She could hear Manfred, the orderly in charge of her wing, coming down the hallway with the evening meals. Poison Ivy carefully unscrewed the end of her bedstead and slipped out a thin glass bottle hidden inside. It had taken her months of patient, secret work to synthesise the organic poison in the bottle from leftover vegetables, salvaged from her meals. Only someone of her brilliance could have done it. As Manfred's key jangled in the door, she uncapped the lid of the bottle...

It had been simplicity itself for Harley to peer out of the view-hatch in her cell door and ask Guard Jenks sweetly for a length of tinsel to decorate her cell. She knew Jenks had a soft spot for her and all she would have to do was look sad and wobble her lower lip.

It had been even easier to tie Jenks up with the tinsel once he had entered her cell to put up the decorations. She left him suspended and gagged, and taking his hammer with her, wrapped up in tinsel, she slipped out into the hallway. She was going to get out. She was going to be free. And she was going to ruin Batman's Christmas.



Manfred lay asleep on the cell floor, barely breathing. The poison had done its work. It had put him into a deep sleep so he wouldn't wake up until the New Year. Ivy crept out of her cell and edged along the dim hallway, taking the bottle of poison with her. She was going to make a break for it. She was going to make Batman pay.

Up the chimney, a leap across the wall... and then bye, bye Batman!

However, there was someone else in the furnace room.

"Who's there?" hissed Poison Ivy. "Speak up now! And no funny moves or you'll be taking a very long nap!"



Harley slipped into the furnace room of the asylum. It had taken her almost an hour to get there, staying low and out of sight of the patrolling guards. She knew that on Christmas Eve, the asylum would run on furnace number one which meant that the chimney to number two would be cold and open to climb. It was the only way out. She had planned it meticulously.

Harley stepped into the light, puzzled. She recognised Pamela Isley.

"You're... Poison Ivy, aren't you?" she asked.

"Yes, and you're Harley Quinn. What are you doing here?"

Harley grinned and shrugged.

"Escaping, of course! Up the chimney! What about you?"



Poison Ivy glared back, anger in her eyes. "The same! That's my plan! Go away! We can't both use the same escape plan! The guards are bound to find out twice as quickly if two of us are escaping! Get out, before you spoil it for me!"

"Spoil it for you?" gasped Harley in surprise, "You're the one ruining my plan!"

Harley paused and leaned close. "I tell you what. You tell me why you want to escape and I'll tell you why I do. The one with the best reason wins. Okay?"

Ivy nodded. "I want to make Batman pay for sending me here!"

"So do I!" exclaimed Harley.

"Now look, we can't both have the same escape plan *and* the same motive!" said Ivy.

"We could always work together," suggested Harley.

"Of course we could!" said Ivy smiling a sweet smile that she did not mean.

A short while later, Batman arrived at the asylum.

"I'm sorry to have wasted your time," said the asylum superintendent. "When we called you, we thought we had a double escape on our hands."

"You were mistaken?" asked Batman, grimly.

"Oh, no! Not really, Poison Ivy and Harley Quinn were both trying to escape, but, well, you see... by the time you got here they'd caught each other."

Batman frowned. "Explain, please!"

"We found them both in the furnace room," explained the superintendent. "They had each planned to escape through the chimney but on reaching the furnace room they found each other. Neither of them wanted to go up the chimney first and expose her back to the other, so they spent the whole evening sitting and arguing. A guard heard them and discovered them around midnight, just after we'd called you. Like I said, sorry to have ruined your evening and call you out, it being Christmas and all."



"No trouble," said Batman as he turned to leave. "Knowing those two are still behind bars is a Christmas gift in itself."

THE END